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ABSTRACT

A Kentucky collaborative association for professors of educational administration, the Consortium of Educational Administration (CEA), is described in this paper. The CEA is composed of five regional institutions of higher education with educational administration preparation programs--Eastern Kentucky University, Morehead State University, Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, and Western State University. Purposes of the consortium are to: (1) provide a forum for discussion of common concerns; (2) provide a vehicle for collaboration among institutions; (3) promote shared research among professors; and (4) publish a new journal of research in educational administration. Obstacles to achieving consortium goals include time and funding. (LMI)

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A paper prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration in Tuscaloosa, Al, August 13-18, 1989.

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CAN PROFESSORS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION COLLABORATE?

The historical perception of a professor as an aloof, introverted loner concerned with a minute area of knowledge is slowly evolving to a more accurate perception of an individual concerned about a program area and the broader world around us. Professors typically protected their "turf" at all costs, particularly the sharing of ideas. The turf protection syndrome allowed only limited collaboration usually with one's mentor or a close friend or colleague.

Professors of educational administration in Kentucky were comparable to professors in other disciplines; alone, isolated, and insulated from each other. This was especially true of professors of educational administration at Kentucky's five regional institutions of higher education. By the mid-1980's the Kentucky Council of Professors of Educational Administration had ceased to function from lack of direction and participation.

BACKGROUND

During the 1986-1987 academic year, limited collaboration in Kentucky occurred when Professsor VanMeter from the University of Kentucky invited professors of educational administration from the state institutions of higher education to discuss the impact of mandates imposed by the Kentucky General Assembly on all institutions to revise certificate programs for school administrators. The forum for this discussion was funded by the Appalachia Educational Laboratory. In two sessions, professors exchanged ideas and interpretations of the state mandates for revision. Exchange of ideas was limited to the steps each of the state institutions of higher education with programs in educational administration were taking to revise certificate programs in school administration. Additional collaboration and interaction between professors and institutions did not develop.

In Fall, 1989, many professors of educational administration attended a state training program as mandated by the new Kentucky Beginning Principal Intern Program. While at dinner one evening, several professors of from the regional universities discussed the misery and chaos of being alone, isolated, and insulated from others. From the discussion the idea of a cooperative organization was conceived and planned. Out of the misery and chaos came the light of collaboration based on friendship and mutual respect. Professors at the regional institutions had expressed the concern that each had a very limited opportunity to

work with anyone on ideas, research, publications, or presentations.

THE CONSORTIUM

Kentucky's five regional institutions of higher education that provide preparation programs for school administration: Eastern Kentucky University, Morehead State University, Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, and Western Kentucky University, formed the **Consortium of Educational Administration** (**CEA**). In February, 1989, at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, **CEA** became a reality. The primary purposes of CEA are: 1) to provide a forum for the discussion of common concerns; 2) to provide a vehicle for collaboration between and among institutions; 3) to promote research between and among professors; and 4) to share in establishing a new journal for dissemination of research regarding educational administration. Each of these purposes become an essential facet for the promotion of collaboration between the professors of educational administration at Kentucky's regional universities.

The Kentucky regional institutions of higher education are similar in nature, therefore, a forum for the discussion of common concerns has proven to be beneficial. The five regional universities prepare over eighty percent of individuals who are certified for positions in school administration. Areas of discussion and collaboration have included (a) a review of

preparation programs as mandated by the state; (b) the knowledge base/research base for school administration programs and courses required to meet standards for state and NCATE accreditation; (c) the Kentucky Beginning Principal Testing and Intern Programs; and (d) the recent recommendations and report from the National Policy Board on Educational Administration. Emphasis has been on comparing courses and programs at each of the regional universities, the problems in meeting new state guidelines, and the interpretation of mandates from the state in regard to the preparation programs for school administrators.

COLLABORATION

Collaboration between and among institutions has been enhanced by CEA through discussion of research activities; the sharing of course syllabi, resource materials, bibliographies, simulations, and textbook reviews; exchange of ideas for proposals and presentations. Professors are also visiting other institutions, observing classes being taught and interacting with students. Additional collaboration has involved how to assist new professors in educational administration at the regional universities and the exchange of information concerning professional organizations, conferences, and meetings. The exchange of ideas are only a part of the collaborative activities of participants of CEA. Involvement in assessment centers, social activities, and sharing of rooms at conferences and

meetings have enhanced the mutual respect and trust of those involved. Collaboration has been both formal and informal, but has been exciting and has opened new avenues.

Research, publish, or perish has become a primary emphasis at the regional institutions in Kentucky. CEA has been effective in promoting research activities and ideas between and among professors. Members have been involved in sharing ideas, developing research proposals, submitting proposals for grants, editing papers, and reacting to theories and concepts. From brainstorming activities, numerous ideas have been generated for future research. Ideas for research involve not only the professors but, graduate students and practitioners in school districts. In addition the collaboration on research will also benefit new professors in educational administration at the regional institutions. The research activities will assist participants to do presentations and to publish.

Recently the CEA received a $10,000 grant from the Kentucky State Department of Education for the evaluation of the first-year of the operation and effectiveness of the Kentucky Beginning Principal Intern Program. Additional funding for future years of assessment is anticipated in this area. Additional research and grant proposals are being submitted for the evaluation of different assessment procedures of school administrators; effectiveness of testing programs for principals; and a comparison of the curriculum for preparation of school administrators.

The first three primary purposes of CEA have evolved into the development of a journal. Participants in CEA are establishing a new journal for the dissemination of research, theories/concepts, and preparation programs in educational administration. The new journal is to be refereed with an editorial board from members of CEA. The journal review board will consist of a minimum of twenty-five professors of educational administration from across the nation. The intent is to provide an opportunity for new professors in educational administration to collaborate and to publish.

CONCERNS

Other professors who wish to replicate this structure should be warned; the process takes time. Regardless of the rhetoric, the professors had to see the value and benefit to them, both personally and professionally, before they bought into the concept.

Also, some universities were hesitant to provide travel funds to allow meetings and cooperative ventures. Apparently administrators feared the establishment of another special interest group in the state. However, by involving department chairs and deans, much of the apprehension was allayed. Finances continue to be a major concern to all educators in Kentucky, particularly funding for higher education.

CAN PROFESSORS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION COLLABORATE?

In Kentucky the answer is YES, professors of educational administration can collaborate. The interaction and collaboration of professors has generated an opportunity for research, publications, and presentations. The phobia of being alone, isolated, and insulated from each other has become a thing of the past. "Turfdom" is no longer a concept of power, but has been eliminated for all individuals involved in CEA as they are receiving benefits and recognition. The concept of sharing and caring have become a new beacon of light for the professors of educational administration at the regional institutions of higher education in Kentucky.

An additional spinoff of CEA is to invite all professors of educational administration from Kentucky's state and private universities/colleges to be involved in the rebirth of the Kentucky Council of Professors of Educational Administration with an initial organizational attempt in September, 1989. However, regardless of the success or failure of KCPEA, CEA will continue to exist with special emphasis on the concerns of the regional university professor of educational administration.